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DEPARTMENT FOR T:MHUMPHREY AND NEA/ARP:AMACDONALD  
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SUBJECT: CIVIL NUCLEAR WORKING GROUP INFORMATION REQUEST:  
YEMENI RESPONSE

REF: STATE 127423

In response to reftel, post provides the following information from Vice Chairman Mustafa Bahran of the Yemeni National Atomic Energy Commission (NAEC).

-- While the ROYG is considering pursuing development of nuclear power, any plans are purely speculative at this point. Yemen has no nuclear power related facilities.

-- The ROYG is considering pursuing nuclear energy to shore up energy security as its oil output declines. (Note: Most electricity in Yemen is currently generated by diesel fueled plants. The ROYG hopes to use the country's previously under-exploited natural gas reserves to generate electricity but is aware that these reserves, like the petroleum reserves, are limited. End Note.)

-- It is too soon to forecast how the ROYG would pursue nuclear power. (Note: Bahran told POL/E Chief that he finds it unlikely that the ROYG would be interested in owning or operating the plants or in seeking financing from international organizations. End Note.)

-- The key nuclear decision making body is the NAEC. It is chaired by Prime Minister Ali Mujawar. (Note: Bahran is the Deputy Chair and oversees day-to-day operations. End Note.) Other NAEC members include Minister of Electricity and Energy Awadh Sa'ad al-Socatri, Minister of Public Health and Population Abdelkarim Ras'e, Minister of Finance Numan al-Suhaibi, and Minister of Oil and Minerals Ameer al-Arderous.

-- The NAEC is the existing nuclear regulatory authority. It has a staff of 84 technical employees and has considerable inspection/enforcement authority in pursuit of illegal import/export of nuclear and radiological sources.

-- The country does not have a nuclear liability law in place. A draft law is under consideration by the Parliament. (Note: Post will attempt to obtain a copy of the draft law and forward it. End Note.)

-- The country has no manufacturing base involved in nuclear-related products. It seems unlikely that components or contracting services for nuclear plants could be sourced locally.

-- Yemen has no appreciable nuclear trained workforce and no program for training of domestic personnel in this area exists. Any development of civil nuclear energy would require a significant foreign workforce.

-- Yemen has no current or anticipated nuclear tenders.

-- It is too early to foresee any nuclear sector opportunities for U.S. industry.

-- N/A

-- There are no formal agreements with any nuclear supplier countries.

-- (Note: Bahran did not specify what any political considerations would be, but indicated that he believed there would be some. End Note.)

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